

## **SECTION C**

### **DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS/AND WORK STATEMENT**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

It is the responsibility of the National Park Service (NPS), Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) is to plan, produce and maintain interpretive media for the NPS's more than 350 areas. Indoor and outdoor exhibits, films, publications and videos are enjoyed by visitors at natural and historic sites, and in visitor centers, historic structures, battlefields and park areas.

These contracts will provide HFC and parks with assistance in rehabilitating or replacing old and outdated exhibits or in producing new displays for parks with no exhibits. The work may involve travel to the park areas to meet with the park staff, inspect sites, assess rehabilitation of existing natural history models, specimens, and dioramas, production of new natural history models, specimens and dioramas, some small scale exhibit elements, mannequins with sculpted features, and provide scientific illustration and scenic interpretive art.

Facilities in which NPS museum exhibits are located include contemporary visitor centers, contact stations and historic buildings of various types. Historic buildings which contain museum exhibits include homes, public building forts, industrial buildings and architectural monuments or memorials.

#### **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of these contracts is to establish support services for museum exhibits. These contracts are designed to respond to a need which the NPS has for production of natural history models, specimens, and dioramas and rehabilitation and additions to existing natural history exhibit elements.

#### **3. SCOPE OF WORK**

Independently, and not as an agent of the Government, the Contractor shall provide all services, including labor, material, facilities, and travel (except as otherwise specified in this contract), and otherwise do all things necessary for or incidental to provide research, collection, design, production, transportation, installation, and documentation services for realistic, museum quality natural history models, taxidermy specimens, scientific illustrations and scenic interpretive art, dioramas, mannequins with sculpted features, and some small scale exhibit elements for displays in NPS exhibits throughout the country. The quantity and combination of the following services will vary for each Task Order, according to the requirements of the specific project.

A. **WORK INCLUDED:**

- (1) Conduct independent research related to plant and animal structure, size, color, texture, and other physical characteristics in order to prepare natural history models or to pose taxidermy specimens. Gather all scientific information and resources in order to render scientific illustrations and scenic interpretive art, and to fabricate dioramas of specific habitats. Work includes acquisition of all references and resources required to conduct the research; photocopies of this reference material shall be forwarded to the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) for review and approval.
- (2) Develop design drawings, specimen lists, and landscape diagrams for specific natural history displays, scenic interpretive art, and dioramas. Provide plan view of diorama settings and perspective sketches. This may include the preparation of scale models of dioramas for COTR review. The Contractor shall coordinate their firm's design with the primary exhibit design. Provide detailed drawings identifying materials and methods of attachment/mounting.
- (3) Collect and acquire natural history specimens needed in order to prepare models and natural history displays. Specimens shall be from the appropriate park or habitat area. The Contractor shall identify all sources of acquisition and locations for collection and obtain all necessary conservation permits for review by the COTR prior to collection or acquisition. The Contractor shall send color photographs of all required specimens for COTR review and approval.

Animal specimens will be Government-Furnished, with the required permits and tagging protocols accompanying each animal specimen. The Contractor shall only accept Government-Furnished animal specimens that have been legally obtained and processed through the permit system.

- (4) Prepare individual models of natural history specimens for display in exhibits and dioramas. The models shall be life-size or to a set scale. Creation of realistic, life-size plant and animal models, suitable for close-up viewing is critical. Models of leaves and flower parts shall be the correct thickness and color, and have the same texture as the real specimens. The level of detail in any particular model, however will vary according to the Task Order. Models of mammals shall have realistic fur, or sculpted and painted fur that suggests the appearance of fur texture; the degree of detail will be indicated in the Task Order. When plant and animal models must be made to withstand repeated tactile use by visitors, this will be specified in the Task Order.

The models shall be of complete specimens or of portions of specimens, such as branches, root systems, flowers, or seeds for plants, and skulls or paws for animals. For some plant material, such as grasses and tree branches, the Contractor shall recommend to the COTR either preservation or modeling as the treatment method; the final decision regarding whether a plant specimen is to be preserved or modeled will be made by the COTR. The design and production of naturalistic bases shall be a part of this work.

The reproduction of cultural artifacts, paleontological specimens, and food items shall also be required.

The Contractor shall submit drawings and color photographs of natural history models as they are developed in their studio, for review and approval by the COTR.

The Contractor shall provide rehabilitation services to natural history models requiring cleaning, recoloring, or repair.

- (5) Prepare conventional and freeze-dry taxidermy specimens for use in exhibits and dioramas. Accurate and naturalistic posing, as well as the long-term display of the specimens without insect infestation, shall be of primary importance. Larger specimens shall require conventional taxidermy. Smaller specimens shall be freeze-dried. For each specimen, the Contractor shall submit to the COTR a pre-treatment report that indicates whether conventional or freeze-dry taxidermy is recommended; the final decision regarding the method of preparation will be made by the COTR based on an analysis of the pre-treatment report. Specimens shall be detachable from the exhibit so that they can easily be removed for periodic inspection, cleaning, and preventive maintenance.

The Contractor shall submit drawings and color photographs of taxidermy specimens as they are developed in their studio, for review and approval by the COTR.

The Contractor shall complete a treatment report for each specimen, providing details on preparation procedures, including information on the following:

- (a) Whether or not the specimen was eviscerated;
  - (b) Whether or not the brain was removed;
  - (c) Whether or not the specimen was defatted;
  - (d) The specimen's pre- and post-dehydration weights, if freeze-dried;
  - (e) The specific kind, brands, and colors of paints used, if any; and
  - (f) Insect repellant applied, if any. Insect repellant shall not create any perceivable change in natural colors of fur or feathers
- (6) Prepare scientific illustrations and scenic interpretive art that is used in conjunction with, or as a background for, the display of natural history models or dioramas of specific habitats. Work may include: small line art; large full color murals; and locator/identifier key illustrations, from concept through camera-ready art.

The Contractor shall submit to the COTR for review and approval, sketches and color photographs of artwork as it is developed.

- (7) Prepare natural history dioramas which realistically depict specific environmental scenes or natural habitats. The dioramas shall include any or all of the following: models of plants and animals; geological, landscape, and water features; preserved plant material; conventional and freeze-dry taxidermy; and, scenic interpretive art murals. For ground cover, such as leaf litter and soil, the Contractor shall recommend to the COTR the treatment method; the final decision regarding treatment of ground cover will be made by the COTR.

If aquatic scenes are depicted, the illusion of a water environment shall be incorporated; for example, creating the illusion of sunlight on the water surface. If night scenes are depicted, the Contractor shall propose any special lighting effects, such as eye shine. For some dioramas, the Contractor shall be required to have audio effects associated with the scene depicted. The COTR will make the final decision regarding the use of such special lighting and audio elements. Task Orders will indicate whether the Contractor shall specify these elements or physically incorporate them into their work.

The Contractor shall submit to the COTR for review and approval, drawings and color photographs of dioramas as they are developed in their studio.

The Contractor shall provide rehabilitation services to dioramas requiring the replacement of diorama components, cleaning, recoloring, or repair.

- (8) Produce and deliver a variety of custom mannequins and forms.

Materials and fabrication: Reinforced cast plaster, fiberglass reinforced epoxy resin, or other approved materials, over support armature of steel rod. To mount mannequins, provide hidden steel plates incorporated into the soles of the feet of each mannequin with necessary mounting hardware for attachment into a 3/ 4" plywood base at the bottom of the exhibit case. Heads must be removable, to aid in installing the figures in the case. Mannequins are not intended for tactile use, but shall be fabricated to withstand routine cleaning by maintenance staff.

- (9) Shipping and transporting of natural history specimens, models, taxidermy specimens, art work, and diorama components to the park exhibit installation site, the exhibit fabricator, or Harpers Ferry Center, as specified in the Task Order.
- (a) Shipping: Handling, packing, and shipping of items under this contract requires special consideration and care. Any object shipped or transported by the Contractor shall be packaged during transport. Items too large to be packaged shall be wrapped and protected to avoid damage to the article. The Contractor shall not ship any large items via commercial transport without prior authorization from the COTR.
- (b) General Crating and Boxing of Objects:
- (i) Crates shall be constructed of 1/2" marine grade or exterior plywood with one finished surface.
- (ii) Allow a minimum of two-inches of packing material around individual objects. There shall be at least three-inches on each side between any inner box and exterior shipping container.
- (iii) Nail crates together on all sides except the top or front that is intended to be the opening side; use screws to fasten, and clearly label "Open This Side First." If required, instructions for unpacking the crate shall be placed on the top inside the crate. Put "Instructions Enclosed" underneath the label "Open This Side First."
- (iv) Each crate shall have a packing list attached to the exterior. Instructions for unpacking the crate may be included with the packing list or affixed to the interior of the side to be opened first.
- (v) Label the box appropriately with "This Side Up" and "Fragile." Labels shall be legible and easily seen. If reusing a previously used box or crate, mask out previous labels with paint or brown paper to provide a clean writing surface.
- (c) Product Handling: The Contractor shall store, ship, handle, and transport all exhibit units and related materials in a safe and secure manner. In the event that damage occurs during shipping, it is the Contractor's responsibility to repair or replace any broken, damaged or otherwise unusable element of the exhibits.

- (10) Installation of natural history models, taxidermy specimens, scientific illustrations and scenic interpretive art, diorama components, and mannequins with sculpted features at the park exhibit installation site. Large dioramas may require significant fabrication and assembly on-site, for example when making geological formations and large plant and animal assemblages. The Contractor shall provide to the COTR color photographs of their completed installation. The Contractor shall conduct a walk-through orientation for the Government at the completion of every installation.
- (11) Prepare supporting documentation, such as taxidermy preparation reports, and natural history specimen and diorama maintenance manuals. The Contractor shall provide the COTR with three copies of the maintenance manual; two copies for the Park and one copy for Harpers Ferry Center.

4. **REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONTRACT**

The Government will purchase these services for multiple projects occurring at approximately the same time at parks throughout the country. The Contractor shall be able to work on many different projects at the same time. The Contractor shall perform services for several Task Order COTRs at the same time.

5. **GOVERNMENT FURNISHED PROPERTY**

Reference material and coordination will be provided by the Government for each Task Order.